



Commander Notes

Command Update:

We just entered the 4th quarter of FY2000 and we are into the hot weather of the St. Louis summer. Last quarter was filled with some very successful command events such as the Army Arch Run, Army Birthday, Army Reserve Birthday, and Common Tasks Testing. We continue to push forward with our strategic plan and "taking e-care of soldiers." In the last newsletter, I mentioned that we are using a Balanced Scorecard (BSC) to help us on our strategic roadmap. My HHC Commander's Corner article in the July HUB discusses the BSC in a way to help people better understand it and realize how it can help in many organizations other than AR-PERSCOM, specifically for the most important organization we are a part of -- our families. For more information on this, see the July HUB at internet address http://www.army.mil/usar/ar-perscom/arpercom_fs.htm (Publications/Hub Newsletter)

HHC Happenings:

By the time you read this we will have conducted a "Changing of the First Sergeant Ceremony." 1SG Mike Elliott was selected by the Department of the Army to attend the Sergeants Major Academy at Ft. Bliss, TX. He was a great 1SG and left a lasting impact on HHC and AR-PERSCOM. We will truly miss him. As we say 'Auf Wiedersehen' (German, until we meet again) to 1SG Elliott we say 'Enchante' (French, welcome/nice to meet you) to 1SG Bonita Davis. She took the position 11 July and we welcome her and wish her good luck in the best but toughest assignment in the noncommissioned officer corps.

The HHC Web site is up and running and we want you to visit it and tell us what we are

missing. Right now it contains three areas which include: HHC Policies, Family Readiness/Support Group, and General Sponsorship Information. The address is: http://www.army.mil/usar/ar-perscom/arpercom_fs.htm (Organizations/Headquarters Co.)

Fun Outing

Well, we finally have a fun outing planned for the family support group and we hope "all y'all" (Texan, not just all of you but all of you too) attend. On 12 Aug 00, we are going to O'Fallon, Missouri to watch the River City Rascals play baseball.

The FSG is attending a River City Rascals Baseball Game.

12 Aug, Saturday 1905 (7:05pm)

If you attend, we want to let you know that a large group of us will meet just to say hi, etc. in the ballpark at 1930 (7:30pm) near third base by the Chevy's picnic area and playground. There will also be a large group of us near first base in the beer garden at 2015 (8:15pm).

For more information on the Rascals, you can go to the web site at: <http://rivercityrascals.ntstage1.primary.net/index.shtml>

or call 1-888-762-2287.

Tickets prices are as follows:

General Admission - \$4

Reserve - \$5

Box - \$6

Club - \$8

The Ball Park is located in O'Fallon, MO. From St. Louis, take Interstate 70 (I-70) West to the Highways K & M exit. Take a right (North) from the off-ramp and continue on for approximately one mile to Tom Ginnever Avenue. Take a right (East) on Tom Ginnever Avenue and continue on for approximately one-half mile. T.R. Hughes Ballpark is on the right-



hand side at the corner of Tom Ginnever Avenue and Ozzie Smith Drive.

Again, we hope to see you there.

FSG/FRG Leader Notes

Bringing Everyone Up To Date -

My spouse (MAJ Schmidt) and I attended our first Family Academy the beginning of May in Kansas City, courtesy of the 89th RSC. Even though AR-PERSCOM does not fall under the RSC (we answer to OCAR), for Family Readiness purposes the 89th will be helping us.

As a result, MAJ Schmidt re-circulated the family surveys to keep with the standards already established by the Department of the Army. We have had a great response this time, with many of you expressing an interest in helping on many different levels, from advice to jumping in. We have just reached the cutoff date for survey returns, so we will now be able to go over what we have, see who is interested in what, and start contacting people. Over the next couple of issues we will start addressing the topics of interest checked off on the surveys as well, and start preparing for some classes.

Tracy Schmidt

Acting Family Support Group Leader

Volunteers – Basic Descriptions –

There are two types of volunteers needed, official and participant. An Official Volunteer signs a Volunteer Agreement, and needs to attend a Family Academy within one year of signing. Official Volunteer time commitments would depend on what committee they are on, and whether or not they are chairpersons. For example, the newsletter editor would collect news and create the newsletter, volunteers could research and find articles for the editor.

A Family Participant does not have to sign agreements or go to Academy, but is available to help out as needed, on a schedule that's

good for them. An example would be setting up and cleaning up after meetings, or even giving a class. Family Participants are valuable assets to the group.

New Addition To The Group -

We would like to extend a welcome and thank you to our newest volunteer, Shauna Burwell. Shauna joined us at our last meeting and so far is being a big help assuring me we can get this done, as well as proofing this newsletter. If anyone else wants to stop by and check out a meeting, the next one is scheduled for 1300 hrs on 26 July. Verify time and date with HHC. Soon we have to come up with a better time and place, suggestions are welcome.

Program Name Change -

Effective 1 June 2000, there are no longer Family Support Groups. Support has a negative connotation, implying we need to be taken care of. We are now Family Readiness Groups (FRGs). To help us transition to FRG we titled this letter Family Readiness/Support Group. The next one you see will read Family Readiness Group.

TRICARE UPDATES:

Debt collection assistance officer program to ease TRICARE credit hassles

The Department of Defense announced today a new debt collection assistance officer program to help servicemembers, retirees and their eligible family members with TRICARE-related debt problems. For the first time, an assistance officer located at each military treatment facility (MTF) and TRICARE lead agent office, will be the single point of contact when a TRICARE beneficiary needs help with these kinds of problems. "We do not want our servicemembers to have the burden of resolving individual claims. They should not have to



worry about negotiations with multiple agencies to settle outstanding claims, stressful notices from bill collectors and, sometimes, adverse ratings in their credit reports," said Under Secretary of Defense for Personnel and Readiness Bernard Rostker. Identification of the assistance officers, scope of their responsibility and training will begin immediately. The new program will begin within 30 days. Incorrect billing to service members for outstanding medical bills was a key issue at the first Military Family Forum at the Pentagon on May 31.

Once contacted by a TRICARE-eligible beneficiary, the debt collection assistance officer will intercede with all agencies involved, including military personnel offices, the MTFs, lead agents, network and non-network providers, TRICARE Management Activity, managed care contractors, and even debt collection agencies when appropriate, to resolve a collection issue arising from a TRICARE claim.

The debt collection assistance officer will research the TRICARE claims history with the priority unit at the claims processor, and notify the beneficiary of the resolution. If appropriate, written documentation will be provided for use with national credit reporting companies in removing unwarranted adverse credit information related to TRICARE claims. Service members in remote locations may contact any debt collection assistance officer who is convenient for them. These points of contact will be identified by the military Services prior to implementation of the program. "Our beneficiaries value their medical care benefit, and they have told us on surveys that it is a primary reason for staying in the military," said Rostker. "Our service members deserve assistance and relief from unwarranted collection actions resulting from unpaid medical

claims." Seeking immediate help with questions regarding their medical bills remains the TRICARE beneficiary's best defense against credit problems, according to Rostker. This type of assistance is available at local TRICARE service centers and military treatment facilities. Beneficiaries also can call claims processors using their toll-free telephone numbers. Additional information about TRICARE claims processing can be found on the Military Health System/TRICARE Web site at: <http://www.tricare.osd.mil>

TRICARE Help E-Mail Service (THEMS) Information –

The purpose of this correspondence is to make you aware of a relatively new service designed to assist all TRICARE beneficiaries. In your current position, I am sure you have contact with many beneficiaries who would benefit from this service.

THEMS works by allowing individuals with access to a computer at work or at home to e-mail their TRICARE questions, issues, or concerns to the following address: TRICARE_Help@amedd.army.mil where we have experts on staff to answer their questions and pass on their comments. We handle everything from basic TRICARE information to individual TRICARE issues, including claims issues. Issues beyond our control, such as political/policy changes, are routed to the appropriate agency for their comments.

We track each and every e-mail we receive to ensure all correspondence is answered promptly and accurately.

Thank you for your assistance in ensuring all who could use this service are aware of our efforts to provide assistance to them,

MAJ Howard J. Schellenberg
TRICARE Division, HP&S
USA MEDCOM



Something Old, Something NEW -

The following articles and some of the web sites have been in previous issues, but included here for the benefit of those who have not seen them.

What is AR-PERSCOM -

- o AR-PERSCOM Mission: To provide the highest quality personnel life cycle management and services resulting in a trained and ready force in support of the National Military Strategy.
- o AR-PERSCOM Vision: Precision Military Human Resource Management @ Speed of Electrons.
- o AR-PERSCOM Purpose: Right Soldier. Right Place. Right Time.

*Always@YourService
Taking e-Care of Soldiers*

What is AR-PERSCOM Family Readiness/Support Group -

- o Purpose: To serve AR-PERSCOM soldiers and their families.
 - o Vision: Willing, Able, and Ready.
 - o Mission: Ensure soldier preparedness and family self-reliance.
 - o Values: The Army Values of Loyalty, Duty, Respect, Selfless Service, Honor, Integrity, and Personal Courage. Our key value is Duty (fulfilling obligations not just at work but also at home).
 - o Mission Essential Task List (METL)
 - Key Family Requirements (KFR)
- Newsletter
Family Sponsorship
Training

Some Important AR-PERSCOM Phone Numbers -

- o Headquarters and Headquarters Company and Family Support Group Office:
(314) 592-0708.
- o Staff Duty Officer/NCO: (314) 592-0707.
- o Employee & Soldier Assistance Center:
(314) 592-0507 (help with alcoholism, family problems, marital difficulties, financial trouble, stress, drugs, and depression).
- Inclement Weather: (314) 592-1111
(after 4:30 a.m.)

Web Sites of Interest -

www.aafes.com: browse the catalog online.
www.armyspouse.com: evolving web site, containing information about FGS, Space A, and other information.
www.hqda.army.mil/acsimweb/family/family.htm: check Flonotes section for monthly news sheet for Army families.
www.redcross.org/afes/index.html: how the Red Cross can help service members and families.
www.spousenet.com: created and run by Air Force spouses. Support.
<http://trol.redstone.army.mil>: Listings include benefits, entitlements, and MWR. Slow to load.
www.army.mil/usar/ar-perscom/arpercom.htm: the AR-PERSCOM official website. Can find copies of past newsletters there, and other information.
www.afvclub.com: Armed Forces Vacation Club
<http://www.washingtonpave.org/stomp.html>: STOMP (Specialized Training of Military Parents) helps military families with special education or health needs.
mfi.marywood.edu/RESEARCH/INFOTRAN/INFOTRAN.HTM:
Military Family Issues: The Research Digest
Sponsored by The Office of the Assistant Secretary of Defense. Each issue focuses on a



topic. These issues are relevant to military families, and are quick to download.

www.nmfa.org/home.html: National Military Family Association, Inc.

www.nmfa.org/contactTricare.html:

has hyperlinks to various tricare sites by region, information on DEERS, the National Pharmacy, and dental plans.

You can now e-mail address changes to DEERS –

Individuals with access to the Internet can now e-mail address changes -- including address changes for geographically separated family members -- to the Defense Enrollment Eligibility Reporting System (DEERS) database. The e-mail address for DEERS is (addrinfo@osd.pentagon.mil).

DEERS recommends using all lower-case letters when typing the e-mail address. E-mail messages should include the following information: (1) Sponsor's name and Social Security number; (2) The address change you desire; (3) Names of other family members affected by the address change; (4) Effective date of the address information; (5) A telephone number and area code to reach the sender. Other information, such as addresses for geographically separated family members, will be processed if you provide it. The e-mail address is an alternative for updating mailing addresses. Other ways to update your records in DEERS include:

- o Initiating a request through your nearest military personnel office;
- o Calling the DEERS Support Office at one of its toll-free numbers:
 - o 1-800-334-4162 (California only);
 - o 1-800-527-5602 (Alaska and Hawaii);
 - o 1-800-538-9552 (all other states).
- o FAXing address changes to (408) 655-8317;

Mailing the address-change information to the DEERS Support Office.

Proponent

The proponent for this publication is Headquarters and Headquarters Company (HHC), AR-PERSCOM. Comments should be forwarded to AR-PERSCOM, ATTN: ARPC-ZHC (FSG), 1 Reserve Way, St. Louis, MO 63132-5200. Or email: john.manning@arpstl.army.mil

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CPT, MP
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*"To be in your children's
memories tomorrow you have to
be in their lives today. "
Author Unknown*